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Finley Won't Veto Stay at Workforce Development Center

But Will Be Forced to Veto Other Human Service Funding to Maintain "Freeze"

Waukesha, Wis.- On Wednesday, the Waukesha County Board will come to grips with whether or not to maintain one-stop service delivery at the Workforce Development Center or move county staff to the Human Services Center. The state budget passed earlier this year, sliced funding by \$150,000 from funds the county currently uses to provide eligibility screening and case management for Medical Assistance (IM) and Food Stamps.

In an effort to minimize costs and reduce the county taxpayer subsidy for state IM programs, County Executive Finley calls for moving the outstation services at the Workforce Development Center to the Human Services Center. "It's an absolute shame that the State of Wisconsin does not recognize that offering multiple social services under one roof better enables W2 recipients to help themselves," said Finley.

If the County Board decides to backfill the state funding cuts, it will cost county taxpayers about \$92,000, which would put the county budget over the legislative proposed property tax freeze. "If the Board believes keeping county staff at the Workforce Development Center is a priority, then they must also recognize it will come at the expense of other human services," Finley added, "I will be forced to veto other services to ensure the county budget stays within the legislative proposed property tax freeze".

In addition to the \$150,000 cut to IM, State officials have already warned Waukesha County of additional cuts to IM in 2005. According to Finley, moving county staff back to the Human Services Center is a defensive action that will help mitigate the impact on property taxpayers when the state cuts funding for mandated IM services in the future.

The Workforce Development Center opened in 1995, at which time Waukesha County entered into a ten-year lease (through 2004). In anticipation of Wisconsin welfare reform (W2), services were designed around a one-stop customer focus concept by which customers would receive integrated and coordinated job readiness, employment, and financial services.

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